(15)

TIT FOR TAT;

OR,

Common Senſe, in Anſwer to a *Plain Queſtion*,

ADDRESSED TO THE

Burgeſſes and Freemen of the Town of Shrewſbury.

GENTLEMEN,

IN War, while the grand Armies take ſome Repoſe, it is not unuſual for the light Troops and Irregulars, occaſionally to ſkirmiſh.——Upon this Principle allow me ſome Obſervations on a Piece of ill-ſupported Scurrility that bears hard on the Son of an old Cuſtomer and Benefactor.—That the preſent Member is a Man of Family, Fortune, and unexceptionable domeſtic Character is admitted, neither is any Reproach attached to his parliamentary Reputation, though perhaps no peculiar Encomium can be juſtified, for as to his never having accepted *Place*, *Penſion* or *Title*, theſe Favors are generally underſtood as Sops to ſtop the Mouths of Yelpers, and our Country Newſpapers have never yet announced *his* giving his Tongue.—But the Logic that aims at proving *that Man* the Champion of your *Rights as free Electors* who wiſhes to preclude you from exerciſing the Right at all, is curious enough, for without Competition, how *can* free Choice be exerted, and if Mr. J. HILL, having *once* crept into the Borough, is to remain its Repreſentative as long as he thinks proper, this ſaid *free Right* is unqueſtionably ſo long ſuſpended. However, I mean not to notice every pompous Boaſt, and illiberal Sarcaſm; my leading Intention is to refute the Charge,—" that your Liberties are invaded by the " Interference of improper Influence."——That the Neighbouring as well as Reſident Gentlemen, *have*, and may continue to recommend Mr. WILLIAM HILL, as the proper Object for your Choice, cannot be denied, and for my own part I conſider them well intitled ſo to do.—Were not my Obligations to the noble Father of our Candidate ſufficient, certainly when my Chriſtmas Bills come to be delivered in, and honourably diſcharged, by the worthy Owners of Sundorn and Loton, of Cundover and Longnor, with innumerable other kind Employers, Friends to this Slip of the old Attingham Stock, my Gratitude could not much be boaſted of, were not their Recommendation attended to with Civility and even Predilection.——Would not Sir R. HILL himſelf accuſe of baſe Ingratitude the Tradeſmen of Wem or Whitchurch, (among whom has been immemorially expended his Fortune,) who at a County Conteſt ſhould brave his Intereſt?———Having allowed all this, I cannot think my Freedom endangered, or my Opinion in any hazard of being imperiouſly controuled; for what Credit can attach to a Slander unſupported by even an Attempt at Proof? I therefore fear not Coercion, and am bold to tell the Author of this Attack, (if the Whiſpers that circulate of his Identity are juſt) that the Threats of a Cuſtomer who may improperly *demand* my Vote will be as little likely to influence *my* Deciſion, as the Expectation of the Hawkeſtone Preferment may do *his Own*; though my Senſe of Obligation is as ſtrong for former Favors as *his* can be, for being tranſplanted by that Patronage, into his preſent Situation.

That the Gentlemen above alluded to will *forget their Promiſes*, is more than this Author can anſwer for, but the Immorality of Lord BERWICK's chuſing to have a Dinner on Sunday as well as Monday, is a ſerious Charge

indeed, eſpecially as that of Inebriety is implicated in it.——Some exaggerated Story of the Steward's-Room Conviviality perhaps; for as to the Parlour, it has never reached my Ear, that my honourable *young* Maſters poſſeſs a better Knack at toſſing off their half Pints, than the Fox-hunter of Prees, or even the Saint of Hawkeſtone.—No Part, indeed, of this virulent Attack cuts me ſo deep as this double Sneer at the Edifice itſelf, the Erection of which enabled me and ſo many other Voters to rear their Families, and at the uniform Hoſpitality that adorns it.—Surely this Writer muſt envy every one a good Dinner but himſelf, and like Caſſius in the Play, muſt be, " a Man of a lean and " hungry look."——

As for the ſtale and hacknied Arguments of the *Peace of the Town being diſturbed*, they almoſt ſave me the Expence of Ipecacuanha whenever adduced, and are unanſwerably refuted in my firſt Sentence, with this additional Remark, that *they*, in reality, commence the Diſturbance, who inſtead of Moderation and good Manners, in an Appeal which muſt, from the Nature of our happy Conſtitution be frequently reſorted to, unneceſſarily foiſt into the Conteſt the moſt rancorous Effuſions of Sentiment; the moſt illiberal flow of Expreſſion.——As for the *riding Scouts* (Falſtaff's Men in Buckram) I contend not for non-entities: but quit my Author and his motley Production, not, its true, without an high Admiration of thoſe ſingular Talents, which have enabled him to unite the Jargon of the Tabernacle with the Democratic Rant of Copenhagen Houſe.—And of my Brother Burgeſſes and Fellow-Tradeſmen I take my Leave, with an Apology for not being up to my Adverſary in *Rhyme*, though I flatter myſelf the Deficiency is well ſupplied by an ampler proportion of *Reaſon*; proteſting that this Trifle is preſented them with the kindeſt Intention, and that I am in Fact

As much as Man can, or ought to be,

A Free and Independent

Burgeſs.

SHREWSBURY,
December 17, 1795.